

NOVEMBER PROGRAM REVIEW

Marc Chatov - Portrait Demonstration

By Bootsie Callaham

The PSA General Meeting and Program was held at the Johns Creek Art Center near Duluth on November 30, 2010. On a stormy cold night the PSA members were warmed by the gracious, renowned artist Marc Chatov who was introduced by Past President Lora Hill. Marc delighted the group with an alla prima portrait demonstration in oils. He chose Ernest Varner as his model, someone he had long wanted to paint.

photos by Robert Christie



In beginning, Marc stressed the gamma or harmony in families of colors. For this portrait he chose violet, blues and cool reds placed on a large wood palette. He began the painting with bold strong dark strokes across the canvas, creating masses. He then indicated features, adding midtones and pulling in colors and shapes as he saw them. "Everything that you see is a shape - round, triangular, rectangular, or spool/bowtie. Anything you paint can be done using these shapes," said

Chatov. "When I am looking at a color, as I break it down in my head I ask: What color is it? Is it warm or cool? Is it high chroma or low? What kinds of edges does it have? When I look at a color, it has a shape - the shapes get smaller and smaller as the painting is refined."

Because it was not obvious that Marc was measuring the subject as he painted, one member asked him how he got the proportions correctly. Quickly, Marc turned, tossed a brush to the gentleman who immediately caught it. The artist explained that the man's brain had to measure the trajectory and calibrate the distance and time for it to reach him in order to catch the brush. He said, "If you can do that, you can measure the distance from the nose to the lip. Use your eye to measure - the ability is there, you just have to learn to use it."

Someone asked about strokes which Marc said he applies either with or against the form and tries to reinforce the structure with strokes. He added that he likes painting fast and with thick paint.



Marc asked the audience in general what the most important thing was that they had learned from a teacher. Someone replied "squinting" which he agreed was very important; another said values, which he said were the most important.

Another quite interesting tip was that he doesn't generally use a fan brush, but loves to use it on a form to soften the edges where needed. He demonstrated this just using the brush to lightly push paint from the form at its edge.

With his extraordinary talent, excellent sense of humor, interesting stories of his Russian heritage, and an outstanding portrait demonstration, much was learned and greatly appreciated by the group.

Chatov's palette of colors, L to R that night included:

Cadmium yellow light - Grumbacher
 Yellow ochre - Gamblin
 Radiant magenta light - Gamblin
 Radiant blue light - Gamblin
 Radiant violet - Gamblin
 Cadmium red medium - Grumbacher
 Cadmium red deep - Grumbacher
 Theo violet - Grumbacher
 Ultramarine violet - Rembrandt
 Quinacridone rose - Grumbacher
 Turquoise - Grumbacher
 Viridian - Rembrandt
 Transparent red oxide - Rembrandt
 Raw Umber - Rembrandt
 Lamp black - Rembrandt